

CLAIM(S)

I claim:

[0028] 1. A method of performing an abdominal crunch exercise comprising the steps of:

- 5 [0029] (a) placing an object on the anterior torso of a user while lying in a supine position, said object providing resistance to a compressive force;
- [0030] (b) engaging the object with the upper thighs and the arms of the user; and
- [0031] (c) contracting the abdominal muscles so as to attempt to compress the object between the upper thighs and the arms of the user.

10 [0032] 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the object is a compressible pad of material having oppositely disposed first and second surfaces for engagement by the arms and thighs of the user.

15 [0033] 3. An exercise device for aiding a user in the performance of an abdominal crunch exercise comprising:

- [0034] (a) a first surface sized and oriented to engage each of the arms of a user while lying in a supine position;
- [0035] (b) a second surface sized and oriented to engage each of the thighs of a user while lying in a supine position with the user's knees in a raised position;
- 20 [0036] (c) a resistance interacting between the first and second planar surfaces to resist movement of said surfaces toward each other as said user contracts the abdominal muscles.

25 [0037] 4. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said resistance provides a resistive force that is proportional to the degree of movement of said first and second surfaces toward each other.

30 [0038] 5. The exercise device of claim 1 wherein said resistance comprises a pad of compressible material.

[0039] 6. A method of performing a crunch or crossover exercise for strengthening the abdominal muscles of a user comprising the steps of:

- 35 [0040] (a) providing a compressible and resilient pad having a substantially flat first

100° to 120° relative to said first surface.